

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended.

Attached hereto is a Request for Approval of Drawing Corrections that amends Figs. 10 and 21 to correct typographical errors.

Without acceding to the propriety of the outstanding rejection, the claims have generally been amended to clarify certain aspects of the invention. In particular, Claim 1 now recites that the CPU is capable of temporarily branching to a process corresponding to information in a programmable first register means for each cycle or a plurality of cycles of a unit process for the non-volatile memory. The unit process includes the application of an erase voltage for an erase operation or a program voltage for a programming operation, and a verify operation.

In contrast, Matsubara, which was asserted as anticipating and/or rendering the claims obvious, clearly illustrates on column 13, lines 36-48 that a transfer control program transfers the rewrite control program to RAM. Once transferred to the RAM, the CPU then executes the rewrite control program in the RAM.

There is no teaching or suggestion of branching to a process corresponding to information in a programmable first register means for each cycle or a plurality of cycles of a unit process for the non-volatile memory as recited in independent Claim 1. Column 25, lines 5-27, confirm this deficiency in that there are no flags in the control register PEREG of Matsubara that would even allow the branching as claimed.

Likewise, column 27, lines 13-16, and column 28, lines 3-7, illustrate that Matsubara is subject to the exact drawback that the present invention is designed to avoid as discussed on, for example, page 3 of Applicants' specification.

As will be appreciated from the above discussion, the remaining independent claims are also not anticipated by Matsubara. See, for example, lines 7-13 of Claim 7, lines 7-10 of Claim 10, lines 7-10 of Claim 17, lines 7-10 of Claim 24, lines 11-27 of Claim 34, lines 11-25 of Claim 35, lines 13-24 of Claim 36, and lines 10-22 of Claim 38.

Accordingly, the outstanding rejections should be withdrawn. An early Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

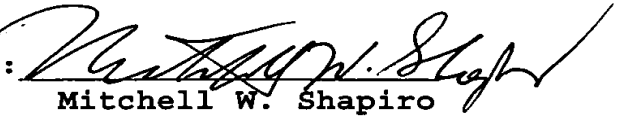
The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to

Deposit Account No. 50-1165 any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§
1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this paper and to
credit any overpayment to that Account. If any extension
of time is required in connection with the filing of this
paper and has not been requested separately, such extension
is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

MWS:JHV:adc

Miles & Stockbridge P.C.
1751 Pinnacle Drive
Suite 500
McLean, Virginia 22102-3833
(703) 903-9000

By: 
Mitchell W. Shapiro
Reg. No. 31,568

Jason H. Vick
Reg. No. 45,285

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